



Bandelier National Monument Press Release

For Immediate Release

April 27, 2006

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BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT IMPLEMENTS NO SMOKING FIRE RESTRICTION

Darlene M. Koontz, Superintendent of Bandelier National Monument announced today, "We have been experiencing many hot and windy days that have dried- out the trees and grasses throughout the park. To reduce the threat of human caused fires, we have put Stage I fire restrictions in place. Smoking will be limited to developed areas only and prohibited in all backcountry areas and on all trails. Although Bandelier always prohibits campfires in the backcountry, campfires will continue to be permitted within designated fire grates in Juniper and Ponderosa campgrounds. No closures are being implemented. These restrictions began one minute after midnight, Thursday morning, April 27, 2006 and will remain in place until the fire conditions improve."

Visitors to the Monument may still use safe, petroleum-heated stoves, lanterns or cooking devices in the designated front-country and backcountry campgrounds. Stoves should only be used in locations clear of vegetation or other flammable materials.

"Prevention is the key to not having big wildfires. We need everyone to do their part to not let a wildfire start," said Bandelier's Fire Management Officer Gary Kemp. "Here are some very simple things that everyone can do to prevent wildfires: Build safe campfires (in designated areas only) that are away from vegetation and make sure that they are out cold before leaving them. Smoke in fire safe areas away from vegetation and dispose of your cigarettes in ash cans. Never use fireworks during high fire danger periods. When camping, use lanterns, stoves and heaters safely – in areas away from tents and clear of vegetation. Visit this website to stay informed about fire conditions:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/swcc/information/firerestrictions/restrictions_closures.htm."

The toll free fire restriction hotline phone number for New Mexico is: (877) 864-6985. For further fire information visit the Southwest Area Wildland Fire Operation website at www.fs.fed.us/r3/fire.